

Li and the Rock

Li was a poor farmer. He lived in a village in China a long time ago. Li worked very hard, but he never managed to save any money.

Li often told his wife, "We will never be rich, but we are happy. That is more important than anything."

One evening Li was walking by the sea. Suddenly, he saw a very large black bird. It was the biggest bird he had ever seen. It had great wide wings. The bird flew down from the sky. It landed on a pile of earth on the sand.



Li stopped. He said to himself, "That bird is called a koo. I have heard tales about the koo. People say that it rests only on spots where treasure is buried."

Just then the bird flew away. Li hurried to the pile of earth on the sand. He began to dig into the earth with his hands. Soon his fingers felt something hard. He kept on digging. Then he pulled up a big rock. It was covered with sand.

Li tried to clean the sand off the rock. But the sand was stuck to the rock. It would not come off.

Suddenly Li thought to himself, "Any treasure that is found must be brought to the Emperor¹. Suppose someone saw the koo land on this spot. Suppose that person saw me digging here. He might tell the Emperor about me. The Emperor could have me killed. I must show this rock to the Emperor."

Li went home to his wife. He told her what happened. Then he said, "I must bring this rock to the Emperor."

"Yes," said Li's wife. "That is what you must do."

The next morning, Li went to the Emperor. Li told the Emperor, "I am a poor farmer. My name is Li. I live in the village of Shen. Last night I was walking by the sea. I saw a koo land on a pile of earth sand. I dug into the earth. This is what I found."

Li showed the rock to the Emperor. Then Li said, "I will give this to you as a gift, Emperor."

The Emperor was surprised. He looked closely at the rock. Then he slowly reached out. He held it in his hands. The rock was very heavy. It was dirty and covered with sand.

"What!" said the Emperor. "Do you think this is some treasure? Do you think I am a fool! Are you making fun of me?"

The Emperor called out angrily, "Take this farmer away! Lock him in a room!"

¹ **Emperor:** a king

Reading Mini-Assessment Grade 3

LA.E.1.2.2 Plot/Conflict Form A

So they took poor Li away. They put him in a little room and locked the door. Li wondered what to do. But what *could* he do? He took the rock and put it in a corner.

Many months passed. Li's wife did not know where he was. No one sent her word of Li. She was very worried.

Li was in a very cold room. There were holes in the roof. The rainy season came. Every night the rain fell into the room. The rain dropped on the rock.

One day Li looked at the rock. The rain had washed the sand away. The rock was shiny. It was bright yellow.

Later that day, a man brought Li a bit of food. Li pointed to the rock. He said, "Take me to the Emperor. I must show this to him."

"Come with me," said the man.

Li showed the rock to the Emperor. Li said, "The rain has washed away the sand."

The Emperor was amazed. He said, "The rock is gold! I did not know that when you brought it here. Never have I seen a piece of gold so big!"

Then the Emperor told Li, "You shall have a very fine reward. You will be a rich man. You will never have to work again."

Li bowed and said, "Thank you, Emperor. But most of all I wish to see my wife." They sent for Li's wife. They brought her to the Emperor's palace.

Li put his arms around his wife. He said to her, "I have something wonderful to tell you."

She said, "I see that you are safe and well. That, alone is wonderful to me. I was afraid that you were dead."

Li's eyes filled with joy. He smiled as he thought to himself, "How surprised she will be!"

<p style="text-align: center;">Reading Mini-Assessment Grade 3 LA.E.1.2.2 Plot/Conflict Form A</p>
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Name _____ Date _____

Directions: Read the passage “Li and The Rock”, then circle the letter of the correct answer.

1. What is Li’s BIGGEST problem in the story?
 - A. He could not decide what to do about the rock he found.
 - B. He did not want to give the rock to the Emperor.
 - C. The Emperor locked him up for making fun of him.
 - D. His wife did not agree with his decision about the rock.

2. What is the FIRST event in the story that tells that the rock was gold?
 - A. The rain washed the sand off the rock.
 - B. Li showed the rock to the man who brought his food.
 - C. The Emperor was amazed by the huge piece of gold.
 - D. Li heard people say that koo birds rest on spots where treasure is buried.

3. Li decides to tell the Emperor about the rock because he wanted
 - A. to impress the Emperor.
 - B. to make a fool of the Emperor.
 - C. to become a very rich man.
 - D. to be sure he would not be killed.

<p style="text-align: center;">Reading Mini-Assessment Grade 3 LA.E.1.2.2 Plot/Conflict Form A</p>
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4. Li's eyes fill with joy because his wife
- A. will be surprised at his wonderful news.
 - B. will live in the palace with him.
 - C. will see that the rock is really gold.
 - D. will meet the Emperor soon.
5. How was Li's problem solved?
- A. His wife found him locked in the palace.
 - B. He saw a large black koo bird land on a rock.
 - C. The Emperor gave him a fine reward for the rock.
 - D. The Emperor saw that the rock was gold and set him free.

<p style="text-align: center;">Reading Mini-Assessment Grade 3 LA.E.1.2.2 Plot/Conflict Form A</p>
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Answer Key – Li and the Rock

LA.E.1.2.2: The student identifies plot development or conflict resolution in a story and/or identifies how story events contribute to the plot development or conflict resolution. The student also makes simple inferences or draws conclusions regarding story elements.

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 - C. **The Emperor locked him up for making fun of him.**
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